

Please amend the present application as follows:

Claims

The following is a copy of Applicant's claims that identifies language being added with underlining ("__") and language being deleted with strikethrough ("—"), as is applicable:

1. (Previously presented) A method for facilitating image retrieval, comprising:

querying a user as to at least one attribute of an image the user wishes to retrieve by posing a series of explicit questions to the user;
receiving explicit user responses to the posed questions; and
presenting at least one image to the user based upon the user responses.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the successive questions depends upon the user response given to a previous question.

4. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising eliminating potential image matches in response to the received responses.

5. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising prompting the user to explicitly identify an image attribute of an image presented to the user so as to increase the proficiency with which images are retrieved for the user.

6. (Previously presented) The method of claim 5, further comprising storing image metadata in response to the user identification, the metadata identifying the image as containing the image attribute that the user identified.

7. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising prompting the user to identify select images of the images presented to the user that each contains a particular image attribute so as to increase the proficiency with which images are retrieved for the user.

8. (Previously presented) The method of claim 7, further comprising storing image metadata in response to the user identification, the metadata identifying the select images as each containing the particular image attribute.

9. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising analyzing images for a recognizable image attribute during an image storing process.

10. (Previously presented) The method of claim 9, further comprising storing image metadata in response to the analyzing, the metadata identifying an analyzed image as containing the recognizable image attribute.

11. (Previously presented) An image retrieval system, comprising:
means for querying a user as to attributes of an image the user wishes to retrieve by posing a series of explicit questions to the user;
means for receiving explicit user responses to the questions; and
means for presenting images to the user based upon the user responses.

12. (Previously presented) The system of claim 11, further comprising means for enabling the user to explicitly identify image attributes of the presented images.

13. (Previously presented) The system of claim 12, further comprising means for storing an image metadata in response to user identification of image attributes, the metadata identifying image as containing the image attributes that the user identified.

14. (Previously presented) The system of claim 11, further comprising means for analyzing images for a recognizable image attribute during an image storing process.

15. (Previously presented) The system of claim 14, further comprising means for storing image metadata in response to the analyzing of the images, the metadata identifying an analyzed image as containing the recognizable image attribute.

16. (Previously presented) A computer program stored on a computer-readable medium, comprising:

logic configured to generate and present explicit questions for a user that are designed to elicit responses as to attributes of an image the user wishes to retrieve; logic configured to receive explicit user responses; and

logic configured to determine which images may satisfy the user's retrieval wishes.

17. (Previously presented) The program of claim 16, further comprising logic configured to enable the user to explicitly identify image attributes of the presented images.

18. (Previously presented) The program of claim 17, further comprising logic configured to store image metadata in response to the user identification, the metadata identifying the image as containing the image attribute that the user identified.

19. (Previously presented) The program of claim 16, further comprising logic configured to analyze images for a recognizable image attribute during an image storing process.

20. (Previously presented) The program of claim 19, further comprising logic configured to store image metadata in response to the analyzing of the images, the metadata identifying an analyzed image as containing the recognizable image attribute.

21. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising prompting the user for keywords or phrases during an image storing process, the keywords or phrases being relevant to content of an image.

22. (Previously presented) The method of claim 21, further comprising storing keywords as metadata in response to receiving keywords or phrases provided by the user, the metadata identifying the image as containing content described by the keywords or phrases.

23. (Previously presented) The method of claim 5, wherein explicitly identifying at least one image attribute comprises explicitly selecting a portion of an image presented to the user.

24. (Previously presented) The system of claim 11, further comprising means for prompting the user for keywords or phrases during an image storing process, the keywords or phrases being relevant to content of an image.

25. (Previously presented) The system of claim 24, further comprising means for storing keywords as metadata in response to receiving keywords or phrases provided by the user, the metadata identifying the image as containing content described by the keywords or phrases.

26. (Previously presented) The program of claim 16, further comprising logic configured to prompt the user for keywords or phrases during an image storing process, the keywords or phrases being relevant to content of an image.

27. (Previously presented) The program of claim 26, further comprising logic configured to store keywords as metadata in response to keywords or phrases

provided by the user, the metadata identifying the image as containing content described by the keywords or phrases.